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The Head of the Household of Faith

BY G. STANLEY RUSSELL

The living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those that believe. I Timothy 4:10.

THE Prisoner of Chillon, in his wretched cell, tells us that he found relief at first by varying the directions in which he paced it. At length, however, he had exhausted this alleviation, and, making footholes in the wall, clambered up to the barred window and at last caught a glimpse of the mountains:

> I saw their thousand years of snow
> On high—their wide long lake below
> And the whole blue Rhone in fullest flow.

With a real similarity these letters of Paul during his final imprisonment show him pacing his cell in different directions and then scaling the window to look at the mountains. With rare agility his mind traverses Europe and Asia, knocks at a door here, lays a wreath on a memory there, and, when writing to Timothy especially, returns again and again to personal relationships, to the love he has borne his correspondent from his boyhood, to the hopes he cherishes of his courage in the task of Ephesus, and, perhaps above all, to the comfort and joy their mutual affection is bringing to the Apostle's closing days. Yet, with all his mental journeyings, the imprisonment would become unendurable were it spiritually impossible to view the mountains. John Bunyan, who spoke from experience, said that even a dungeon becomes tolerable if it has a window, and that is true metaphorically as well as otherwise.

Therefore we have Paul, like the Prisoner of Chillon, making footholes in his mental walls and clambering up that he may behold those great ranges of the soul which give him courage to wear his fetters bravely. That is why so many great sentences occur in the

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epistles of the captivity. The cramping character of his imprisonment conferred liberty on his imagination; the narrowness of his cell opened his eyes to the vistas of God's character and purposes; the niggardliness with which light and air were meted out to him physically brought a generosity to his spiritual conceptions. Therefore you get an utterance like my text—the dimensions of which grow more majestic the longer you consider it, the beating music of which becomes sweeter the nearer it is heard, and the conceptions of which push out the walls of all narrow thinking and make us realize what this man was and to what a gospel he gave his life.

Our generation is beginning to understand Paul—some of us think for the first time. He has languished so long under the reputation of an obscure theologian, responsible for the gloomy passages in our creeds and confessions of faith, that the amazing depth of his personality has been lost in the effort to learn his missionary journeys and understand his theory of original sin. Yet the thing that matters most is neither his restless energy of body nor his amazing suppleness of thought, but his extraordinary power of piercing through to the realities which underlie human living. The assertion by one who probably found its practice not too easy that tenderness is the only sufficient motive for anything we do, or are, or give, is read in the 13th chapter of I Corinthians without our fully realizing that it is an illuminating and searching of the very depths of our souls.

I

In the great sentence before us you will notice that he is giving Timothy conceptions of religion so wide and deep as to make the most hasty pause, and that he begins with three words in which he asserts that *what we call "religion" is just our conception of life and all it contains*—"the living God." It is a majestic phrase and often nothing more than a phrase. To a vast number of us "living" is one thing and "God" quite another and never the twain shall meet. The one represents the constant practical pressure of every day, the naked realities, the clamant necessities. The other stands in the realm of abstract ideas, the things concerning which people write books and argue, the things which may be interesting or uninteresting but never vital.

Now this separation is purely modern and Western. In the East there is never the slightest idea that anything can happen without God, and indeed the fatalism of the oriental is not to be ascribed—as we so often ascribe it—to his hopelessness, but to his amazing idea that not an atom of life is conceivable without the power of God. In the Gospels there is not a sentence spoken by him who spake as never man spake which does not insist upon a conception of God not as a problem, and still less as a pall of darkness, but as the Source, Secret and Substance of Life. The Earl of Oxford's Autobiography closes with the quotation, without comment, of those lines which begin "God be in my head and in my understanding," as if to affirm that a very noble but singularly reticent soul was, in its deepest places, aware that "living" and "God" were inseparable terms.

Were one anxious to be critical of scientific though in our generation, one would point out not only it fundamental contradiction today of the times when i used to tell us that matter was the ultimate thing, no only the amazing fashion in which it is now laying its emphasis on that spiritual conception of existence which religion has been affirming from the beginning but also the things it omits from a professedly wide outlook over all the facts. There is no difficulty now in prolonging the beating of a heart removed from the body; authentic instances are available in which physical animation has been suspended and resumed; there is therefore a possibility that we shall ultimately create a living cell. But is that life, or does it bear the remotest resemblance to life? Neither chemistry nor physics is capable of reaching or exploring that animating principle the operation of which the ancient priest of Genesis described when he said "and man became a living soul." Just as Sir Arthur Keith dealt with a man too big for his biology, so his successors are charting a sea of which no shore will yield to any measuring line they know. Yet their efforts to tear its secret from life, so far from having shaken the main conclusions of religion about the universe, have immensely reinforced them. Many of us have forgotten that, when Robinson Crusoe saw the footprint on his island, he fled panic-stricken to his hut, and spent a whole night in terror, he little thought that, in the issue, that footprint would bring into his life his man Friday, and as after his fashion, he philosophizes upon that, he says "the evil which most we seek to shun and which when we are fallen into it, is most dreadful, is often the very door of our deliverance."

Paul, you remember, was an immense believer in the happy issue of apparently unfortunate circumstances and religion has nothing to fear from anything science may produce or proclaim, for her experience hitherto has been that, when the conclusions seemed most serious and threatening, they have been found to reinforce and make doubly sure her fundamental fact of the "livingness" of God.

Frank Bullen in his autobiography, *With Christ at Sea,* tells us how he often stood on deck in Sydney Harbor and listened to the church bells playing "Sicilian Mariners," with a deep longing in his heart for something—he knew not what. For years he carried it and all sorts of things awoke it once more as a great aching desire which was neither physical nor intellectual but deeper than either. Nature aroused it in the sunset, and in the voice of a bird, and in that realization of wonder which makes Whitman cry that "A mouse is miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels." Intercourse with his fellows awoke it, as he saw the insatiable desire for goodness in men which persisted beyond their failures, the amazing sacrifices of mothers and wives and the rich service of those who ask no reward except to be saved from discouragement. The touch of religious ordinances stirred it in the peal of a bell, the tone of an organ, the silent appeal of a dedicated art. Yet none of these things

which had power to call it forth, could lay it to rest satisfied and glad. That came only when, in an old sail-loft, he tells us "the pent-up feelings of years broke loose and I knew that at last the thing was being offered me which, above all others, I must have."

"The living God," says Paul, and therein he strikes through to the ultimate. Beyond tradition, behind theory, beneath argument is that Ultimate Soul to whom our souls were born, and by the knowledge of whom they live, as a child lives after he has learned to recognize and love his mother's constant presence, to depend upon her guidance, to find in her his refuge, and, long after manhood, to rise to his tenderest and best when the thought of her awakens in his heart.

Our lives are one
With that Great Heart
That thunders in the height.
We share the storm with Him.
Our souls are tranquil therefore;
Though the world be swept with fire
The blast that breaks
The fortress of the flesh
Shall lift us on its breath
To higher vision, wider vistas,
Holier dreams.

II

Yet you notice that Paul passes from measuring the depth of religion to asserting *its unbounded horizon.* "The Saviour of *all* men." In these days of so-called "Good Catholics" who have made the term ridiculous in various ways, it is well to realize what an excellent Catholic Paul was—in the real sense of that tortured word—for he thought and lived "in terms of the whole." He is swift to draw the contrast between "that which is in part" and "that which is perfect" (in the sense of complete) and avoids that partiality which is born of incompleteness of outlook. We are so prone to identify vast things with the little bit of them to which we belong, with the result that socialism is for many just the advantage of the manual worker, progress just the prosperity of our own neighborhood, Christianity just Protestantism, and faith something that omits the sweet meditations of Buddha or belittles the fierce piety of Mahomet. Canadian missions deal with portions of the world which those of England hardly touch, and I was interested, on one of my early visits to what has since become my homeland, to read the story of Korea, to know that there was once there a civilization, a culture, an art, and a religion of the most beautiful kind, that it all centers round a king—almost as legendary as our own Arthur—whose insistence on love as the basis of everything has been taken by our own Christian missionaries as the starting point in their effort to promote the spiritual resurrection of Korea.

Those who say that one religion is as good as another are wildly mistaken, but when you get to the depth of the world's worship, you discover that the differences are of degree in revelation and experience, and Paul will set no limit to any man's chance of salvation. If not one way then another; if not in this life then in a life to be; if not by a way that seems clear to us then by a process that seeks only to be effective with him, God will labor to have not one life cast as rubbish to the void. If one does "perish," it will be as the result of its own indomitably obstinate self-will, and not because of any decree of heaven.

No man ever held more firmly to the sole sufficiency of Jesus Christ or gave himself more feverishly to the task of bringing men to rely on that, yet no man more stubbornly refuses to despair of the ultimate fate of what our fathers would perhaps have called "uncovenanted souls." On the slopes of Mars Hill he told the Greeks that, after all, he was only bringing them

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the reality after which they had been seeking—not a different God than he to whom they had reared their fumbling altars—and the true preacher always knows that he is dealing with a fundamentally religious world and chiefly occupied in explaining it to itself. In the streets of Corinth, even at the entrance of the houses with red lamps of shame he saw one man only—"the man for whom Christ died" and in whom sooner or later Christ would live. Over the problems of the world he always used a spiritual perspective glass which told him that to have hope in this world only is to be most miserable and that the things which are seen are temporal, and therefore highly misleading without their proper background.

He is especially fond of that word "all"—"till we *all* come unto the perfect man," "a ransom for *all,*" "delivered him up for us *all*"—and, in my text—"the Saviour of *all* men." With Nero on the throne of the world it was an amazing vista of redemption and of the unity of races, grades and conditions of men. With principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness

of this world around him, it was an astonishingly courageous view of things. Yet this, and not mediaevalism, is the Catholic note—the certainly that Christ is the light of the *world,* and that the world in its heart knows that right well even amid its apparently thickest darkness: the conviction that, whatever appearances may be, nothing can finally withstand redemption or hold at bay the dominion of the Cross: the assurance that, perish what may, perplex what can, the great brotherhood of sin and salvation (which is the fundamental description of mankind) finds at once its unity and its hope in that which has flickered in many places but flamed on Calvary's hill:

Oft when the word is on me to deliver,
  Lifts the illusion and the truth lies bare;
Desert or throng, the city or the river,
  Melts in a lucid Paradise of air.

Only like souls I see the world thereunder—
  Bound who should conquer, slaves who should be kings
Hearing their one hope with an empty wonder
  Sadly contented in a show of things.

Then with a rush the intolerable craving
  Shivers throughout me like a trumpet call—
O to save these! to perish for their saving,
  Die for their life, be offered for them all.

III

Yet to see the world so and human beings so is the distinction and prerogative of what Paul himself once called *the household of faith* "and especially of them that believe." Things are real to many people who do not recognize and rejoice in them. The sun is real to the whole world, in the sense that it *is* and that they live by it, but it was real in another sense to Brother Francis, who saluted it, honored it, and sang of it. The household of faith is not only the *object* of God's redemption; its members have consciously accepted it—and therefore this "especially." When we talk of "people who are Christians without knowing it," let us realize that we are using words very carelessly. Ultimately, no man is a Christian without knowing it, for the very center of Christianity—as Paul never tired of telling people—is a conscious allegiance to Jesus Christ and witness for him.

The phrase "them that believe" has an interesting context in the New Testament. We read that the power to become the sons of God belongs to "them that believe," that the Holy Spirit is received by "them that believe," that signs shall follow "them that believe"—including healing and casting out of devils—that the servant of God, despised by the world, is received with joy by all "them that believe." So that the household of faith is a well-defined company, distinguished from the world by its beliefs. The question, "Does it matter what a man believes, as compared with what a man is?" is answerable only in one way. It matters everything what man believes, for what he believes will determine what he is. Belief is, in the end, not doctrinal or intellectual but ethical, not speculative but formative.

Therefore, may we ask, what do the household of faith believe?

Can we find any broad categories under which we may fittingly group the supreme realities of faith in Christ?

There are only three that fundamentally matter and the first is

PRACTICAL RELIANCE ON SPIRITUAL VALUES.

When science and religion have united to affirm that the reality behind life is the invisible and the divine, when the newspapers have announced it, and the intellectuals assent to it, the household of faith consists of those who *live* by it. "Papa, what's money?" asked Paul Dombey, and his father did not seem to know. That is the trouble; nobody seems to know. A philosophy of money is one of our most urgent requirements—especially perhaps in the New World, but by no means exclusively there. Is money a thing to live for? No? Then why live for it? Is it not an amazing thing that the most prolific cause of suicide is what is described as "pecuniary embarrassment," and that the first motive sought for self-destruction is financial worry? When he was robbed on the high-road, Bunyan tells us that Mr. Little-Faith lost only his spending-money but he adds that it was a very real loss to the poor pilgrim—"he was forced to beg as he went to keep himself alive, but beg and do what he could, he was still hungry most of the way." That sentence is instructive.

Yet the real significance of all these things—money, pleasure, bodily comfort and the rest—is not that we despise them or that we do not feel the loss of them, but that we dedicate them, recognize them as what science tells us matter is meant to be—just the clothing of reality, good or evil, blessed or accursed, according to the thing which puts it on. There is neither goodness nor wickedness in a dollar bill until somebody spends it, and then the values they cherish, the purposes they entertain, the ideals they honor, invest it with life or death. This is the philosophy of "them that believe" about their possessions, but it is also their philosophy about themselves. Jesus has nothing more vital to say than his parable of the empty house which devils occupied, unless it is that passage in which he declares that the end of all religion is that men should share the nature of God and be perfect with his perfection. It is in this ambition that the household of faith differs from the common crowd. It is pledged to spiritual values, linked to definite ambitions, out on pilgrimages from the City of Destruction to the City of Light.

It is because that separateness from the usual outlook is so real that the "Pilgrim's Progress" must always remain the classic of the Christian life, which still knows Vanity Fair and By-path Meadow, as well as the Palace Beautiful and the Interpreter's House. Such people not only proclaim the scientific doctrine that the invisible is the real, but they live by it, and, when need be, endure as those who see through to that world beyond, where decisions and consequences have their birth under the hand of God. Therefore, very ob-

viously and naturally, the second article in their creed is

A CONSTANT TOUCH WITH THE FORCES OF HEAVEN.

We use the word "Heaven" as a synonym for the spiritual world. It is true to say that we simply do not know anything about prayer until we have realized it as claiming and possessing and bringing to our aid these forces. No one is perhaps further removed from experience of the occult than I, but I have seen a mind moved by no other medium than the pressure of other minds, and there is not the slightest question that the Indians of North America, the ancient Egyptians, and more than one living race of colored people are in possession of powers and secrets which we have not even begun to understand. Readers of Mr. Edgar Wallace's African stories (founded, of course, on personal experience) will know what I mean.

Once, on the ship going to England, I found myself talking to a British officer who had commanded a column in German East Africa and who was sufficiently unlike his kind to have an immense opinion both of missionaries and of natives—even preaching the heretical gospel that every man should be judged by his heart, and not by his racial or facial accidentals. Among other things he told me that he had made no small friendship with some of his native N.C.O.'s, had been allowed to investigate to some extent the phenomena of witchcraft and magic, and had not the remotest doubt that within them were real forces, capable of being employed benevolently, as in healing, or otherwise.

Now, rightly viewed, though differently inspired, prayer is such a force; it is the perception of personality Godward, the drawing power out of the invisible infinite, the identifying of the will with the great waves of the moral and spiritual ether. To degrade it into mere petition—though petition has its place—is to dishonor it; it is the keeping of the self in touch with the spiritual forces which govern life; in simpler terms it is conversation and partnership with God. Those forces of heaven not only reinforce, however; they rebuke. Ian Maclaren has a story of the man Andrew Harris who was elected an elder, and who on the night for hearing objections rose and said: "There is a man I envy every day; it is the man whose life is clear; wherefore I take objection, being a true witness, against the life of Andrew Harris and declare he is not fit to be an elder of the kirk."

Most of us who have given up prayer have done so because we have misunderstood it. It is the great regulating influence of life which brings us back to the true touch with reality. In Aberdeen we used to have a clock which was corrected at noon from Greenwich by electric contact, and we would stand before it at that hour—not to know the time, but to see the current come in a great flash of energy, seize the hands and bring them to exactly twelve o'clock, and, as they trembled under irresistible power, cease again. When we pray, it is far less that things may be *given* us as that they may be *done* for us, and that we may go on reunited to and regulated by the great currents of righteousness and love which are in Christ Jesus. And that this may begin, the household of faith has a third article in its creed and that is

CONVERSION.

Oh, I know, the word "conversion" is an unfashionable word and an unusual thought for some of us, but not the best nor the wisest can make anything of life in Christ until he has entered into it with all his heart, or can live by spiritual values in prayer and humility of mind until he has found himself where Paul found himself—in the dust. We are terribly afraid to confess that we are sinners when, as a matter of fact, that is what we are.

The supreme business of the church—and therefore of the preacher—is not aesthetic satisfaction or even intellectual edification but the bringing of men to where they know the plague of their hearts, as Luther called it, and the one Physician. The household of faith is a household of converted men and women. They that believe, believe in redemption and regeneration not as things in a catechism but as things experienced. The forces for which they seek added power in prayer are forces which have turned them Christward and set them ever after facing that way. Nor have they stopped there, for they have made them conscious of their responsibility for others. Matthew Arnold used to say that the story of Sampson Staniforth's conversion deserved to rank with that of Paul, yet it was only the story of two soldiers, one of whom, Mark Bond, was determined that his association with his comrade should end in his finding Christ. Henry Drummond used to tell a similar story of a medical student who added a year to his course to win his friend for the Savior.

When we get too superior for this bed-rock truth of conversion we shall have ceased to have any gospel at all. Bishop Selwyn found his South Sea diocese so enormous that he could never evangelize it all, so he got one man from each island and tribe and made him a Christian and sent him back pledged to win to Christ the place and people where he belonged. Is not that what the church does with every service that disperses? Is it not the obligation to do that—and the privilege of doing that—which make God in Christ *especially* the Savior of them that believe? And is it not just in our believing that we find him coming near, in the darkest of our nights and the stormiest of our conflicts, saying, "According to your faith be it unto you"—to which, if we are good disciples, we shall answer: "Lord, increase our faith."

THANKS are due Rev. Ernest Marshall Howse, of Westminster Church, Winnipeg, for his co-operation in the selection of sermons by representative preachers of the United Church of Canada for inclusion in this special number.

THE EDITORS.

The Protestant Faith and Today

By T. W. Jones

Take care: Be on the alert: Watch and Pray. Mark 13:33.

I find myself constrained to write and cheer you on, to the vigorous defense of the faith, delivered once for all to God's people. Jude 3.

THE words of the familiar maxim, "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty," have frequently been quoted in relation to our heritage in the realm of citizenship, and particularly to the freedom in civil and social affairs which it is our privilege to enjoy.

The same principle might very fittingly be applied, however, to our religious heritage. There is no realm of life in which freedom has been secured at greater cost than in that of religion, nor is there any area of human experience where it is easier, by neglect or by indifference, to surrender those vital elements that safeguard the very citadel of the soul, and thus leave the spiritual life defenseless in the hour of greatest need.

The challenging message of our Lord to his disciples, to "be on the alert, to watch and pray," applies as directly to this aspect of the religious life as to that in which this command was first given. We are reminded by the stirring appeal in our text from the Epistle of Jude, that in the very earliest days of the Christian church it was necessary to point out the dangers with which the Christian community was even then confronted; and necessary also to remind the believers of their responsibilities, in defense of the faith committed to their care.

While the pages of church history reveal most clearly that the principle of constant watchfulness, or "eternal vigilance," has always been applicable to Christianity, and doubtless to all other religions also, it is our conviction that it applies with specific importance and unusual urgency to those who share the heritage of the Protestant faith in these tumultuous days.

Never were the words of St. Paul, as recorded in the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians—"For freedom did Christ set us free: Stand fast therefore and be not entangled again in a yoke of bondage"—more important to Christians anywhere than they are to Protestant folk in this North American continent, and particularly in Canada at this present hour. For the Protestant church, and the historic faith we hold, are definitely on trial, and stern times of testing await us. We do well, therefore, to heed carefully the warnings so clearly sounded in our texts, and to fortify ourselves in the faith in order that we may "keep the great securities of the faith intact."

To this end there are at least four things that every individual Protestant, and every congregation within the Protestant fellowship of churches, ought most earnestly to strive for:

I

We need, first, *a deeper appreciation of our Protestant heritage.* The time is long overdue for a new evaluation of Protestantism, based upon the revealing facts of history. Protestantism has suffered, and is still suffering, from an overemphasis on the *protest* elements in the work of the great Reformers, as though their mission was wholly condemnatory, and their primary concern was to set up a church in opposition to that of Rome. Without a shadow of doubt, there is an element of truth in this conception of the stand which our "fathers in the faith" felt compelled to make. They believed that in the teachings and the practices of the

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Roman church there were things utterly alien to the gospel proclaimed by Jesus Christ their Lord, and foreign also to the practices and teachings of the early Christian church, as revealed in the New Testament record. These accretions, resulting from ecclesiasticism alienated from the great simplicities of Christianity, may be found displayed in any record of the teachings of the church throughout the Middle Ages: the celibacy of the clergy; the withholding of the cup from the laity; the exaltation of saints as objects of adoration; the practical deification of Mary the Mother of Jesus; the pernicious teaching of the confessional, and the abominable practice of the sale of indulgences; and other features altogether divorced from the gospel of divine grace as proclaimed by our Lord and his apostles—these could not but arouse men to "protest" when once their eyes were opened to see the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

But protest against the things that were wrong was but one aspect of the work of the Reformers. Indeed,

the most vital element in all their glorious ministry was the *rediscovery* of the original Christian faith. They found, beneath all the ecclesiastical rubble that had accumulated throughout fifteen centuries, the abiding foundations of Christian hope and Christian ministry. And on those foundations, laid by Jesus Christ alone, they set themselves, in a spirit of creative passion, to erect a more glorious edifice of faith for the glory of God and the service of mankind. It is true that the Protestant Reformation, as a fact of history, is dated as coming to birth in the opening years of the sixteenth century, but it is just as true to affirm that the roots of this mighty "tree of life" are to be found grounded in the fruitful soil of the New Testamen, being nurtured there by the Master of the Garden himself.

Just as we need a new interpretation of the facts of history concerning the achievements of the Reformers, we need also a deeper appreciation of the quality of their life and character. They were not perfect any more than human beings in any age are perfect, but they were giants in the faith, valiant souls who "counted not their lives dear unto themselves," that they might "finish their course" in unswerving loyalty to their Lord and Master, and pass on to others the torch of spiritual freedom. There are names on the church's roll of service, the heroes of the Reformation period, that should again become household words, familiar to us all. They form indeed a worthy supplement to the roll of heroes of the faith listed in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. The time would fail us to tell the story of Wycliffe, Tyndale, Huss, Savonarola, Zwingli, Luther, Calvin, Knox, and a mighty host of others, who through faith were enabled to throw off the ecclesiastical yoke of bondage, and to move forward out of the darkness of superstition into the light of the glorious liberty of the truth of the gospel.

Our church life today needs the spiritual tonic of fuller knowledge and clearer understanding of these valiant souls and their stupendous achievement.

II

We need second, *a more systematic and thorough training of our Protestant youth in the vital aspects of this precious "Faith of their fathers."*

The Reformers, in their quest for the central truths of the gospel, came face to face with the sublime conception of the sovereignty of God. Constrained by that revealing truth, their souls cried out for holiness. The works of their own hands, acts of penance laboriously performed, even the offering of masses by the priests, all appeared hopelessly inadequate to fit the soul to stand within the radiance of that eternal splendor. It was under the spell of this soul-searching conviction that they experienced the releasing, transforming power of Jesus Christ their Savior and Lord. The mystic certainty of divine redemption dawned upon their souls, and they caught up the cry of the ancient prophet and made it their own, "The just shall live by faith." In the spiritual glow of that liberating discovery they realized that "without benefit of clergy," and independent of any human intermediary, they had experienced "grace and salvation." An "open door" had been set before them, and having entered therein they found themselves directly in "the presence of the King." Eagerly they sought for words to give expression to their glowing experience, and they proclaimed to all who sought to share their joy the great creative doctrine of "the priesthood of every believer."

Their spiritual joy was enriched beyond measure on discovering that in the Bible were to be found the glowing testimonies of men who had already shared what they now experienced. The Book suddenly became alive to them. With quivering lips and glowing hearts they cried, as the Seer on Patmos had ages before, "Glory to him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and his father." Henceforth the Book became their unfailing source of light, of comfort and authority. The books of prayers, the rosaries and other adornments which heretofore they had used as guides and sources of help, were now cast aside as useless, for they were no longer adequate to meet the needs of their awakened spirits. It was in the New Testament that they found the food to satisfy the hunger of their souls, and the water of life to quench their spiritual thirst.

It is a story to thrill the soul how the Covenanters, in glen and on hillside alike, treasured the "forbidden Book," risking life itself for the sheer joy of reading the precious messages of eternal truth that are found in its pages.

If the church is to overtake her task, and keep her hold upon the rising generation, she must set herself to the fulfillment of this urgent duty, to acquaint the youth of our day with the vital content of the faith itself, and to retell with all its passionate appeal the thrilling story of how the battle for freedom was won by the heroes and martyrs of the Reformation.

III

Third: Alongside that telling of the story of the rebirth of the faith, there must be *a definite facing of the facts regarding the status of the church in the world today.*

We know full well, and we ought to be wise and honest enough to admit it, that all is not well with the Protestant church throughout the world. Let us stand up and face the actual conditions about us. The spiritual religions of mankind are engaged in a life and death struggle. The forces of materialistic paganism are rampant, and we ignore them at our peril. In common with all branches of religion that hold faith in the One True and Living God, we must do battle with these forces of evil, no matter what cloak they use to disguise their real nature. Wolves they are, even though they come to us in sheep's clothing. Their names are legion: Communism, Fascism, Nazism, Naturalism, and others of kindred breed. There must be no compromise between the Church of the Living God and these forces of Anti-Christ, nor any allegiance with them; for this would inevitably lead to a betrayal of life and the crucifixion afresh of the Lord

Jesus Christ, in a welter of unholy war, for the lust of power and gain of tarnished gold.

The Protestant faith, however, in addition to its struggle against the forces of irreligion, is faced with the necessity for constant vigilance from another angle. For while the world is in a ferment, and the hearts of men and nations that are concerned with the achievement of human brotherhood are deeply troubled, the Roman church, giving but little evidence of any care for suffering humanity, is strenuously pressing her political and social demands for place and power in worldly affairs. Since the close of the World War she has marched into the world capitals with diplomatic representation, accorded only to sovereign states and nations. Throughout the world today, in an alliance of politics and religion, she relentlessly seeks to extend her sway.

Within these last few years she has given her blessing to the ruthless conquest of the free Ethiopian peoples, and openly championed the cause of a rebel government in Spain. In Ethiopia today, doubtless because of the influence and demand of the Roman church, all Protestant missionary work has been ended; while in Spain the prospects for freedom of religion are dark indeed. By these things, the nations that believe in law and order and self-government have been challenged by the Roman church. It is evident to all that no country can count itself immune from the influence of this religio-political state, if her leaders decide that she has something to gain by interference with their internal affairs.

But the challenge to Protestantism is of a much more menacing nature. It is a denial of the validity both of the spiritual experience of the individual Protestant believer, and of the spiritual authority of every non-Roman Christian church. This definite denial of the religious rights of Protestants has been focalized, among other ways, in relation to the sacrament of marriage, by the terms of the "Ne Temere Decree." Therein the right of a Protestant minister to perform the marriage ceremony on an equality with a Roman priest is absolutely denied.

The deplorable social consequences of this attitude are tragically illustrated in Quebec Province, through the annulments granted by the Roman church to the Roman Catholic parties in mixed marriages, where the ceremony was performed by a Protestant minister. In these cases it matters not what solemn vows were taken by the contracting parties; it matters not that little children will be deprived of family associations and branded as illegitimate in a thoughtless and cruel world; it matters not that immorality is increased immeasurably by such broken homes and severed families; all that matters is that the false pride of the Roman church, expressed in its claim to special power for its clergy over and above that admitted to Protestant ministers, shall be satisfied by the canonical annulment of the marriage.

Attempts are constantly being made to have the civil courts confirm the annulments granted by the Roman church. In this connection, however, there is a sharp division of opinion, for while certain judges have supplemented the canonical annulments with civil acts, on the ground that the Roman Catholic Church Law takes precedence in such matters, other outstanding jurists have definitely declined to follow the canon law, and have insisted on the priority of the civil code.

This is not by any means the whole story of what is happening throughout Canada; for while on the one hand there is growing concern regarding the amount of public money being granted for the support of definitely Roman Catholic institutions, and a widespread feeling that the power of the Roman church is being unduly exercised in political matters, on the other hand there is a deep surge of spiritual unrest within the Roman church itself, and evidences are multiplying of the definite break which adventurous individuals are making from fettered membership in this ritualistic institution.

It is, therefore, increasingly evident that "eternal vigilance" must still be our attitude if we are to retain the precious elements of religious and civil freedom bequeathed to us by our fathers, and at the same time stand ready to serve our fellow men in these significant days.

The words of the late Silvester Horne have meaning for the Protestant church today:

> We are watchers of a Beacon, whose light must never die.
> We are guardians of an altar, that shows God ever nigh.
> We are children of Thy freemen, who sleep beneath the sod.
> For the might of Thine arm, we bless Thee, our God, our fathers' God.

IV

The battle of faith will be won, however, not by virtue of our historic heritage, nor by the strength of our institutions, but rather by *the quality of our Christian character and life*. Protestantism, on the part both of its individual members and of congregations, needs a more definitely vital experience of what the earliest Christians and the fathers of the Reformation alike shared, in living fellowship with their triumphant Lord and Master. That inner experience was described by them in terms of "burning hearts" and emancipated spirits. Through living faith in their divine Lord they found freedom and grace and power.

Freedom from sin they found, and from endless ceremonial and ritual, to which they had hitherto been in bondage; which things indeed had an outward show of godliness, but lacked the inner spirit thereof.

Grace they found, and under its saving and transforming influence their wounded spirits were healed and peace in rich full measure filled their souls. Born of that peace came a passionate longing for the troubled souls of men, and so these ransomed, grace-freed souls became evangelists, proclaiming the seeking love of the Shepherd Savior, and the restoring love of the Almighty Father.

Power they found. Power to testify before kings and councillors; courage to live, to suffer and to die, so that even amid the fiery faggots of martyrdom they could cry one to another: "Be of good cheer, we shall

today light such a candle as by God's grace shall never be put out."

Such freedom, grace and power we must have if our religion is to meet the needs of life today.

If the Protestant church, as a living institution, is to be worthy of Christ her Lord, and adequate for the service of mankind today, she must also recapture something of the spirit and quality of life that found such rich and fruitful expression in the first century of Christianity, and which has reappeared again and again in the great creative periods of Protestant history.

The heart of the church must again become vibrant with loyalty to the Lord Jesus Christ alone. The quality of her life must be pure and holy. There must be no compromise with sin. The radiancy of her purity must shine out into a world shadowed by iniquity and darkened by folly. While other institutions may strive for material power and influence, she must seek the things of the Kingdom of her Lord. The motive of her every endeavor must be missionary. The fires of evangelism must ever be kept burning upon her sacred altars.

Whatever else men may experience within the fellowship of the church, these things at least they must never fail to find: comfort for their sorrows; forgiveness for their transgressions; peace for their troubled minds; hope and courage for the untrodden ways; and love, transcending all differences of race or class or creed, binding all fellow Christians together in the hallowing comradeship of brotherhood.

This is the hope of Protestantism in the world today —that every congregation shall be a veritable "colony of heaven," wherein Christ reigns as King and the extension of his Kingdom of love and peace is the accepted and all-inclusive quest of every believer.

Christianity Must Be Revitalized

If ever there was a time of spiritual need and craving, now is that time.

Happiness is one of those profound values of life which humanity must have if we are to avoid overturn and revolution. In the commonly accepted belief of our day the road to happiness lies through material acquisition. Christ, on the other hand, taught that inner happiness comes through the free giving of oneself to other people, irrespective of race, nation, or creed. Christ taught human brotherhood among all races and all nations. How pathetically far away we are from that today!

What complicates the problem is that Christianity today has become so overgrown and choked with materialism that its force is deadened, its truth obscured. It has lost much of its savor. If humanity is to be saved through turning to Christianity, it must be a revitalized and purified Christianity.

Francis B. Sayre.

Jesus said, "Seek, and ye shall find." And it can be said with equal truthfulness, "Whatever you are finding the most of, that is the thing you are seeking most diligently." Roy L. Smith.

The Religious Use of the Imagination

By James S. Thomson

The express image of his person. Hebrew 1:3.

The imagination is a neglected mental activity. We hear much about the emotions, and the hidden springs of conduct that are supposed to lie deep beneath the surface of the mind, but it is through the imagination that we are really stirred into action. Those very practical men—our commercial advertisers —who strew our popular magazines with illustrations realize the power of pictorial appeal. Psychologists call it suggestion—a much more subtle and insinuating way of persuasion than direct command. And suggestion has been described as the appeal to the imagination rather than the will.

It is very fascinating to observe the dawn of imagination in the life of a little child. What a world of make-believe he creates for himself! Story-telling becomes the medium of teaching. Through the imagination the child takes his first steps into the unseen world and the capacity for spiritual appreciation is awakened. And this appeal to the imagination continues through life. It accounts for the immense popularity of the novel in literature. Night after night, innumerable people throughout the whole world sit watching the flickering screen and by means of "the pictures" are transported into all kinds of imaginative experiences.

All the great teachers have known and used the power of the imagination. Almost any subject can be explained to a simple mind, if only it can be illustrated. Plato, at the end of an involved and difficult argument, often concluded with a sublime myth or analogy. Our Lord spoke in parables. These stories of the Kingdom live for ever. They bring the gospel alike to the wisest and the humblest.

I.

Christ himself is God's gift to the imagination. Our text says that he is the *express* image of God's person.

Men have always tried to picture God. Hence the long history of image-worship in religion. These images —grotesque, repulsive, magnificent or beautiful—are like a museum of theology, for they tell us how men have tried to make some visible emblem of divine power.

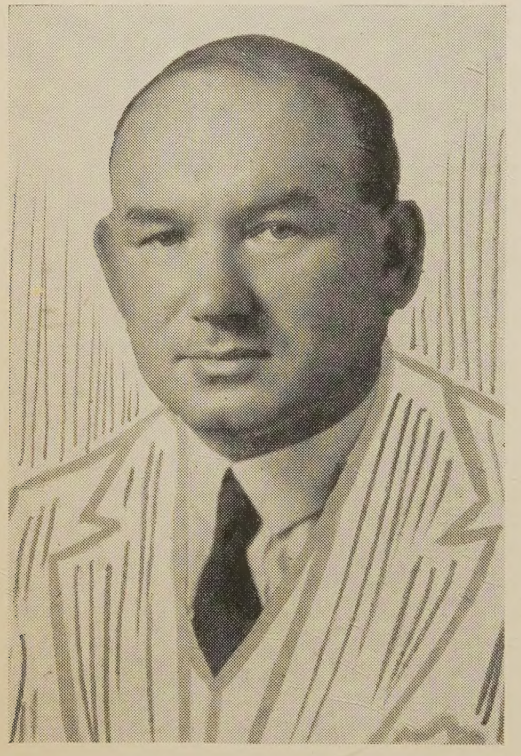
But spiritual religion has always been suspicious of image-worship, and has realized its danger. The second commandment forbids the making of graven images. Because the image comes to be valued for its own sake, it is given divine powers and honors. Thus, religion becomes materialistic and superstitious.

Yet the need for an image of God remains. If religious worship and faith are to be intelligent, we must have some way of holding the reality of God before the mind. We cannot bow down before mere vagueness or pray to a mystery. And yet we cannot make God real to ourselves, for it is surely an im-

pertinence to measure the Eternal and the Divine by our thoughts.

Leslie Weatherhead, in one of his books, speaks of a little girl who was afraid to be left alone at night in bed. Her mother tried to comfort her by telling her that God was always near. "I want a face," said the child. We, too, want a face—an image of God.

The New Testament never wearies in its assertion that Christ is a gift of God to men in the midst of their failures. This is what gives the message of Christ the quality of a Gospel. And his gift is to our imagination. We cannot picture God, so God has pictured himself for us in an express or exact image of his person.



JAMES S. THOMSON

What more adequate image of God could we have than a perfect man? Men have often attempted to make God in their own image. The Greeks carved their beautiful statues of gods and goddesses. The benignant figure of the Buddha reigns over great parts of Asia. The vaulting ambition of emperors and soldiers, and, in our own time, of dictators, has led them to demand divine honors. The first great test of Christian loyalty in history arose out of emperor-worship. But you cannot make a man into a God. How can a creature become the creator?

But God has become man. The Divine has taken shape before us. In Christ we see God visibly and hear his voice. He comes to us not in the swift revelation of some awesome mystery, or in a transcendent formula of philosophy, or as a cryptic secret whispered in the ear, but as a man, simple, speaking words of grace, revealing the perfection of love, in a way that all can hear and see and understand—and in that revelation the simplest heart is glad and satisfied.

II

The imagination is the organ of the Holy Spirit.

George Bernard Shaw, in the greatest of his plays, "St. Joan," represents Captain Robert de Baudincourt speaking with the heroine. Joan says: "I hear voices telling me what to do. They come from God." The captain says in scorn: "They come from your imagination!" Whereat Joan says: "Of course. That is how the messages of God come to us."

The Christian faith is a religion of the spirit. We are not the children of the law, but the children of liberty. There is no Christian book of rules and regulations to which we can turn, as we would to a code of spiritual and moral etiquette, so that we can know exactly what ought to be believed or done under every possible circumstance. Even the Bible is not intended to be so regarded, and many pitfalls await those who make the attempt. We are heirs of the Spirit, and the Spirit speaks through the imagination.

In our circle of acquaintances, we have people of a rather pedantic and literal turn of mind. Often they exasperate us because, when they are confronted with some new thing to do, their powers of action are paralyzed. They want some rule to work by or some precedent on which to fall back. How often we feel like saying to them, "Can't you use your imagination?"

That is what God says to us in his gift of the Holy Spirit. Here is Christ, my image, and here is his spirit now—"Use your imagination!"

Observe this principle at work in the teaching of Jesus. A lawyer comes to him to ask about the way of life. Jesus answers his question in stimulating fashion by asking another, "What is in the law? What do you read there?" The lawyer has his answer neat and ready: "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength and with all thy mind: and they neighbor as thyself." Then follows the typical legalist question, "Who is my neighbor?" Now, Jesus did not supply the questioner with a list of people who might and who might not be neighbors, with a table of permitted relationships. Instead, he told a story—the tale of the Good Samaritan. At the end of the parable, there was only one thing to say: "Go, thou and do likewise." Here is a pictorial expression of how you are to interpret the divine law—now, use your imagination.

III

The imagination needs spiritual cultivation. God uses the imagination, but we neglect it. The imagination is part of the soul, and it needs cultivation.

There is a freedom about the exercise of the imagination that tends to irresponsibilty. In fancy, dream and ambition the mind takes flights without the checks of immediate action. An intemperate use of the imagination may easily become a form of self-indulgence, as subtle as it is secret. We can imagine ourselves being and doing all kinds of persons and things, and because it is all imaginative we regard the exercise as harmless.

But something does happen. A man tends to become what he is in his imagination, for this part of our soul is the germinating bed of subsequent action. This is

a spiritual law that operates for good or evil. A man broods over some region of life or achievement until, some day, the dream flashes into action. When we hear of some sudden downfall, we are astonished at what appears to be a strange collapse. An exalted name is humbled to the dust, or some proud figure is discovered to be a moral weakling. The tragic happening is often not so sudden as it appears to be. It had a spiritual history in the life of the imagination; when the temptation came, resistance had already broken down.

On the other hand, the imagination is the interpreter for the loving heart. It becomes the instrument of sympathetic understanding. Shelley wrote: "A man to be greatly good must imagine intensely and comprehensively: he must put himself in the place of another and many others: the pains and the pleasures of his species must become his own. The great instrument of moral good is the imagination." That great poet knew whereof he spake.

Watch your imagination! Cleanse it. Discipline it. It is the great instrument whereby you can fulfill the divine law of loving God by loving your neighbor as yourself. By use of the imagination, you can enter into your neighbor's situation, sitting where he sits, looking at matters from his point of view. It is an antidote to selfishness and the oppression that comes from selfishness. Reconciliation becomes possible between the estranged. How many an act of wanton foolishness would be restrained if we would only imagine its effects! What floods of benevolence would flow from our hearts if we could only through our imagination picture its results!

If the essence of sainthood is to be Christlike, we must dwell with and in our Lord. This is the New Testament ideal of a Christian. The image of Christ must dwell in our imaginations. Then the law of the spiritual life operates and the contents of the imagination begin to realize themselves unconsciously in character and action.

Good Will the Great Need

In this technological society, science is emphasizing more than ever the need of love for one's neighbors—and that is the central element of Christianity. We are only beginning now to think as a world unit. Antagonisms are self-defeating in the world community and mutual dependence requires consideration of the rights of others. The world as a whole seems to be acquiring a higher standard of morality, and it is evident that the growth of science has been coincident with this moral growth.

Good will among men is more urgently needed today than at any other time in man's history. Man progresses by cooperation. Politics can show us the way, but it cannot give us the spirit, and that is what is vitally needed. Science gives us the knowledge and consequent power; it is for us to determine how that power can be used.

Arthur F. Compton.

Living in Expectation

By E. Crossley Hunter

All who were living in expectation. Luke 2:38 (Goodspeed).

LIVING IN EXPECTATION—What a lovely and wise way in which to live! This phrase describes the fellowship in Jerusalem of those who were living in a dark day, but who were comforted and saved because they lived in expectation. In that group were Elizabeth, Zacharias, Joseph and Simeon. We must not forget Simeon. Perhaps the Christian church has not sufficiently appreciated him. He is the classical example of one who lived by hope. He believed that before he died he would see the Lord's Anointed. He cherished that hope through youth, middle life and old age; down to the very sunset hour he still believed. He lived through one continuous series of national calamities. He saw civil war break out in his country; he saw faction fight faction, the palace and the temple arrayed against each other; he saw the coming of the foreign conquerers, first the Romans and then the Parthians—but he never doubted. He saw his country reduced from proud independence to slavery; he saw Jerusalem pillaged and plundered; he saw a Roman general outrage the holy temple; still he believed. He was an unconquerable soul. There are few things more beautiful in the gospel than the picture of this old man holding the child Jesus, as he prayed: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to they word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation." That is how God rewarded one who lived in expectation.

NATIONS SAVED BY HOPE

Dr. Boreham has a delightful essay entitled "When My Ship Comes Home," in which he says: "I can never remember my mother finally and absolutely denying me anything. No matter what I asked for—a bicycle, a gold watch or a Shetland pony—she invariably assured me the coveted treasure should be mine—when her ship came home! Oh, that wonderful ship of my mother's! How it tortured my childish fancy! How I would dream of the day when my mother's ship would come into port and all my desires would be fulfilled!" Expectation is the charm of childhood, the wisdom of youth and the comfort of old age.

Faith, hope and love—we have heard much of faith and much of love, perhaps not enough of hope. Many a life is shaped by the push of yesterday or by the pressure of today, but the wiser and the greater souls live lives that have largely been shaped and saved by hope.

Man ought to be a creature of hope because he lives in a world and universe that is athrill with hope. To be sure, the universe as we understand it has a long, long past. Nobody knows how old it is. Its rocks, fossils and scars, its mountains and gorges, all hint its mysterious age. But more fascinating and more wonderful still is its destiny. What yet awaits our world! The

poet was not idly dreaming, he was seeing clearly when he visioned

That far off divine event,
Toward which the whole creation moves.

Paul felt the same when he wrote: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, waiting." And what is that but saying that the world is living in expectation?

What is true of the world is equally true of the nation. It too is saved by hope. The greatest thing about a nation is never its achievement, but always its expectation. The temptation and danger of every nation is to rest upon its achievements, and when it does that, its glory begins to depart. The king of ancient Babylon, with proud and satisfied heart, walked upon the walls of the city and said: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" Even as he boasted, the enemy was at the gates.

CANADA AND AMERICA

Greece rested on her achievements; and who can blame her, for in a single generation she gave to the world five great men who have never been surpassed in their respective fields—Demosthenes, the orator; Euripides, the tragedian; Phidias, the sculptor; Socrates, the philosopher; and Phidippides, the original runner of Marathon. What an unbelievable flowering of achievement! Greece was content, and the days of her decline soon came.

It is well for us in America to remember this. Although Canada and the United States are relatively young countries, nevertheless we have already achieved some notable things. But the greatest thing about our countries is not what we have done, but what we hope to do—to continue to make North America a highway of understanding; to see our land become the interpreter of East to West and of West to East; to maintain for all time an international border unspoiled by bristling guns or ugly suspicions; to be able to say to a disordered world, "Look, this is the way. Nations can and ought to live side by side in amity and peace"; to fashion a land, rich in natural resources, into a good land where its riches will not be exploited alone for a few, but where there will be justice and righteousness which will guarantee a true prosperity. These are the greatest things about our countries: the visions that we cherish for the days to come; the hopes for a nobler nationhood, a land of glad tomorrows; not our achievements but our expectations.

THE CHURCH MUST BE EXPECTANT

If this is true of a nation, it is equally true of the church. The spirit of expectation is the mark of a living church. Like the nation, the church is tempted to rest upon her achievements. In spite of her mistakes she has a glorious record, a history of courage, devotion and sacrifice. In every generation there have been noble souls and memorable achievements. But the church must never rest upon its past; it must never lose its sense of futurity or its quality of expectancy. God is still in his world and in his church. That is what we need especially to bear in mind today. There is a mood of futility and frustration upon our generation that must not be allowed to invade the Christian fellowship. It is only the superficial heart that is discouraged by what is happening in the world. On every hand there are hopeful signs for the eyes that see and the souls that can understand. In the growing hatred against war, the pronouncements that the church councils have made that war is a sin and the insistence that we can find a better way to settle international disputes; in the increasing sensitivity and rising protest against the unnecessary suffering of the poor; in the moral indignation that everywhere is rising over the plight of the dispossessed and unemployed; in the increasing interest in the meaning and program of the Kingdom of God; in these and a hundred other things we ought to see God at work in our world.

E. Crossley Hunter

I am perfectly sure the prophets who saw his hand in their dark day would see it in ours. Dr. A. B. Davidson says that the one characteristic belief that all the prophets had in common was that God was going to do something, and he was going to do it quickly. "God is surely coming," cried Isaiah. "He is at our very door," answered Zephaniah.

I know of nothing the church needs to cultivate more than this spirit of expectancy. The death pangs of the old may be but the birth pangs of the new. We are coming to the end of many things, but man's endings have always been God's beginnings. This is no dead age. God has not forsaken the world. He is with us now. I believe he wants to know us just as surely as he wanted to know Israel or Judah of old. He wants to know the men of our generation as much as he ever

wanted to know Isaiah or Amos or Hosea. He is speaking to us as surely as he ever spoke to anyone. This may not be an easy day for the church, but it may be a great day. If only the church were more expectant! If only she talked less about problems and more of her living and conquering Lord, whose word still is: "Behold, I make all things new."

JESUS AND PAUL LIVED BY HOPE

Jesus lived in expectation. If anyone ever had cause to lose heart, it was he. He entered upon his ministry with high hopes. In the days of the wilderness he looked at life steadily, and saw it as a whole; he saw its need and the way of its salvation, and he came out from the forty days of understanding and consecration to say to men: "This is the way. Walk ye in it." But see how the world treated him, how they spurned his entreaty and rejected his love; and still he talked of his Kingdom that would yet come, and when the cross loomed before him he did not despair—for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising its shame.

Paul lived in expectation. If he had stopped to dwell too long upon all that he had suffered, the cruelties and injustices of men, he might have lost heart. Instead of that he preferred to forget the things that were behind, to reach forward and press on.

Perhaps it is a lack of expectancy which delays that revival we all desire to see. That spirit of thrilling hope which was at the very soul of the early church has gone. How did the church ever come to lose it? Nothing is more certain than this: we must regain it if the church is to be a power in the world. Shall we let the programs of nazism and communism stir their followers with greater hopes than the programs of the church? Shall we let Hitler and Stalin talk of tomorrow more enthusiastically than do the followers of Christ? Shame on the church if she is pathetic when others lead the people with false hopes. There is no hope like the Christian hope, a hope steadfast and sure, inspired by him who once said: "Fear not, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the Kingdom." Jesus never mocked men. He never taught them to pray a vain prayer, and when he said, "When ye pray say—Thy Kingdom come on earth, Thy will be done," he believed that Kingdom would come. If only we had more of his expectancy and faith!

AN ACHIEVEMENT OF FAITH

For over thirty years my father gave himself to evangelistic work in Canada and the United States. His first revival was in some respects the most memorable. It was in the town of Kingsville, in western Ontario. He was a college student at the time, having been sent to supply for the summer months while the regular minister was on holiday. The first Sunday he was there, he asked the officials to stay after the service, and asked their permission to hold special meetings the following week. They told him quite frankly that it was out of the question; no one in those parts had ever heard of revival meetings in July. Midwinter was the season for protracted services, but now the nights were hot, the farmers were working on the land, no one was thinking of revivals—and so they turned down the proposal. That week the young minister went about his work with heavy heart. Again the following Sunday he asked the officials to let him try. They attempted to dissuade him, but finally one of them said: "We all know it is useless, but if the young man wants to hold revival meetings, let us not forbid him." So the services were begun, and to this day, around Kingsville, they talk of those wonderful meetings. They continued every night for six weeks and there went out from the altar of that little church young men and young women who became leading missionaries in the Methodist Church of Canada. Doctor Dan McKenzie and his wife kneeled at that altar, gave their hearts to Christ, and went out to give fifty years of missionary service to Japan. Before the revival was over, six hundred had pledged their allegiance to Jesus Christ. It all began in a heart that was expectant.

ALWAYS IN EXPECTATION

The revival of our day may not be the kind of revival of our fathers' day, but whatever its form and program it will not come until our hopes are kindled to see God's beautiful will done on earth as Jesus kindled those hopes in ancient Galilee.

"Thy Kingdom come"—on bended knee
The passing ages pray;
And faithful souls have yearned to see
On earth that Kingdom's day.

And lo! already on the hills
The flags of dawn appear;
Gird up our loins, ye prophet souls,
Proclaim the day is near.

Dora is a member of our radio congregation. She has never seen our church because for twenty-three years she has been bedridden. In all that time she has never walked or left her home. She is possessed of a radiant faith and a wonderful courage, and is the light of her home and a blessing to all her friends. The last time I visited her, I said to her mother, "Does Dora suffer much?" The mother replied: "At times she does. Last week she suffered more than usual, and as I saw the marks of pain upon her face, I became impatient and cried out, 'Dora, why does God let you suffer like this?'" Then this Christian girl turned and said: "Mother, don't you know that the first five minutes in heaven will more than make up for a lifetime of suffering." Why should we question her beautiful hope, for is there not the promise—"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

So would God have us live and labor and come to the sunset of life—always in expectation.

After colleges have found that education cannot be sold; after Congress learns that prosperity cannot be legislated; after the voters learn that relief comes not through the distribution of funds, there will be a return to religion. Roger W. Babson.

The High Cost of Christian Living

By F. H. McIntosh

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. Matthew 16:24.

THIS word of Jesus is a clarion note thrust into one of the pauses in the everlasting chime of his Gospel bell. The fact is that far too many people were thinking of attachment to him and his cause as a casual affair. It was high time to let them know that to be a follower of his one must "strive and hold cheap the strain."

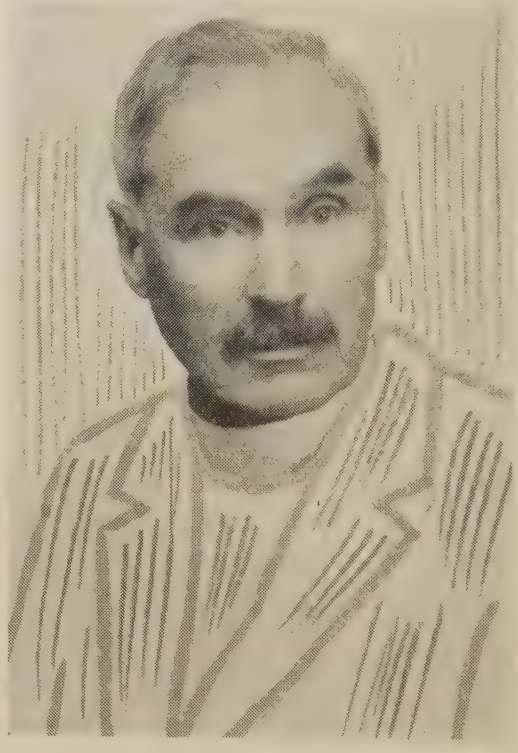
Why was it that the people in such numbers got to thinking that to be a follower of Christ was an easy-going affair? The answer probably is that some were enamored of sensationalism. What they really wanted was not salvation but thrills, just like many folk of our own day. So they went out to see and hear this wonder worker. He had large audiences who watched and waited for another miracle. Jesus became so weary of this itch for the sensational that he said on one occasion: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign but there shall be no sign given it but the sign of the prophet Jonas."

Others followed out of mere intellectual curiosity. They were tired of the "Sabbath drawling of old saws" by Jewish rabbis. Here was a fresh voice, if ever there was one—teaching new doctrines—calling not for a repetition of the "faith of the fathers" as Jewish teachers did; but for a present faith of their own like his in the Heavenly Father. The people liked this new wine of the Kingdom and flocked to hear, but Jesus came to do a good deal more than to sharpen the intellect—and that was not casual or easy either.

Still others followed because of their intense nationalism. The Jewish hope of political restoration through a promised Messiah ever went before them like the fiery pillar in the wilderness. Now, they thought, was the day and hour. The big fellows looked for seats on the right hand and the left of the coming king, and the little fellows longed for the loaves and fishes. To put everybody straight on this question of what it meant to be a follower of the Christ, Jesus said: "If any man will come after me let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." Elsewhere our Lord sets forth religion as a source of comfort but here as a challenge to launch out upon the deep of adventurous service—an adventurous service which admits of no coddling of the saints but calls for self-denial and self-sacrifice.

I

Jesus calls us first of all to *self-denial*. Now the word "self-denial" is not a popular one—doesn't sound very much like "the mellow lin-lan-lone of evening bells." Part of our prejudice is due to a wrong conception of what self-denial really is. It is not a ruthless amputation of the natural joys of life just for the sake of the amputation. That would be asceticism of the most pagan sort. It simply is not true that the more we distress ourselves the more we please our God. On the contrary, he delights to delight his children. Dr. W. C. Poole, of England, tells of a boyhood friend of his who loved to play baseball; but he loved to play piano more. So he asked himself the question "What about these fingers of mine that are to be my means of livelihood?" He gave up the baseball because in the region of art he was anxious to "erect himself above himself." So is it with respect to the art of living. We must deny ourselves, not that our personality may be cruelly reduced but in order that it may be worthily expanded. Self-denial is the high cost of living that must be incurred by anyone who would grow a worthy personality.



F. H. McIntosh

Self-denial is usually dealt with under two heads—bodily and psychical. By bodily self-denial we mean that kind of self-discipline which was present to the mind of St. Paul when he wrote of his determination to keep his body under, or as the bright little girl understood St. Paul to say, "I must keep my soul on top." The bodily desires are many and often claimant in their urge. Perhaps the loudest of these appetites has to do with sex. The triumph of a Christian at this point is of the utmost importance. As St. Augustine found, there can be no supreme and eternal moments of the spirit without it. The church historians tell us that the two qualities which most differentiated the early Christians from the world, and most impressed beholders, was their charity and *chastity*. That witness should be as impressive as ever, though it must be

confessed that social service statistics sometimes create misgiving. Let the heart of youth today covet earnestly the boast of Sir Galahad: "My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure." "Me mightier transports move and thrill."

All those who would come after him who goes before in the white robe of the Pure One, must be real candidates—that is to say, those who are clothed in white, washed already in the blood of the Lamb.

By psychical self-denial we mean that kind of self-discipline which is necessary in connection with man's spiritual nature. The seat of selfishness and sin is not in the body but in the will of man. When pride rules our will it is possible to be just as selfish as when we waste our substance in riotous living. There is a type of character sometimes depicted in literature in which the man in question is free from all the bodily vices and is possessed of so many of the natural virtues as to be considered highly respectable, and yet that man's character may be fundamentally ugly and repulsive because his abstinence from the vices and his practice of the virtues are for the sake of one thing—to advance himself or his business. Indeed, in the eyes of God this kind of selfishness may be far more repulsive than the yielding to the flesh. Jesus did not excuse the woman taken in adultery, but he did not denounce her anything like so roundly as he did the Scribes and Pharisees in their smug and self-seeking respectability.

Of course, the one who would come after Christ must practice both forms of self-denial. He who can do both consistently is taking up a self-discipline that will carry him far in his journey toward the sunrising. R. L. Stevenson once said that "if we only knew how to omit we should be able to make an Iliad out of the morning papers." If we only knew how to omit the selfish cravings of the body and the spirit we should at least wear the "white flower of a blameless life." This is one part of the high cost of Christian living.

II

Another part of the high cost of Christian living is figuratively expressed by the phrase—"take up his cross"—self-sacrifice. It has been a matter of perplexity to some that Jesus should have used this figure of speech months before he carried his own cross toward Calvary—what would his hearers know about his cross at that stage of their knowledge? they ask. Not very much, it is true—not enough to serve as a useful illustration. But we must remember that the cross did not begin with Jesus. The cross was already a familiar instrument of torture and death. Any mother of a young zealot proposing to join with these enemies of Rome might say to her son: Son, you are taking a noble and patriotic step, but remember that the moment you identify yourself with this party you are taking up a cross on which one day you may be crucified. Taking up the cross was the high price of being a zealot for the Jewish cause and when Jesus said that anyone who would come after him must "take up his cross," he meant just that. Such was the cost of enlisting in the Christian cause of setting up and setting forward the Kingdom of God in the world. If self-denial is the cost of furthering the Kingdom of God in one's own life then taking up the cross is the cost of furthering the Kingdom of God in the collective life of the world.

This taking up the cross ended in crucifixion for some of Christ's hearers and this possibility must always be kept in mind. Indeed that great Christian scholar, Dr. James Denney, used to say that for Jesus the "ideal Christian is the martyr." In our case it is the sum and substance of that self-sacrifice which we as Christians are expected to make in terms of our time, energy, work, giving and forgiving that God's Kingdom may more fully come. The cross is the symbol of the full measure of devotion to the cause of Christ and taking up the cross is the symbol of any self-sacrifice short of death which the Christian makes. This is the cross of the Christian and it is nothing else in the New Testament.

We do well to remember this, for in common parlance the word "cross" is often demoted from its true place as a word of royal carriage. One time John Wesley was visiting at the home of a wealthy sympathizer. A servant came into the room and threw coals on the fire so clumsily as to cause smoke to puff out in their faces. The host was chagrined and turning to his guest apologized and added, "This is one of the crosses we have to bear." Needless to say, John Wesley was not impressed with his spiritual insight, and no wonder, for we have no right at all to identify the cross with our private and petty annoyances. One of our American ministers was endeavoring to reconcile a neglectful father to his wayward son. He succeeded, but doubtfully we fear, because as he reluctantly consented the father said: "Oh well, I suppose this is one of the crosses I shall have to bear." What right had that careless father to identify the consequences of his own neglect with the cross of the Christian?—that father who looked out upon life with an eye single to himself alone. The Christian enterprise was clean outside the four corners of his concern. Sometimes fathers and mothers when they lose a child through death are apt to say, "This is one of the crosses we have to bear." No one should speak untenderly of such an experience. Of all the pangs that rend the heart this is one of the keenest; but there is no authority in the New Testament for identifying such an anguish with the cross. Bereavement is imposed upon us from without, but the cross we take up voluntarily and bear as the high cost of our adherence to a cause—the cause of Christ.

This challenge should give us pause. We live in a day when so many nominal Christians live at ease in Zion—have little conception of how they should spend and be spent for him who is the king and head of the church. Their characteristic attitude is one of inquiry as to how much the church can do for them by way of the glad hand, an entertaining gospel and general comfort of the soul. Not so did the members of the early church demean themselves. When they joined the church, they did not wait for any reception committee to call on them. They were so much in earnest, they apprehended so clearly the challenge of the Kingdom—"Whosoever he be of you that re-

nounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" —that they cried out, "Lord what wilt Thou have me to do?"

Hear that, ye modern saints who desire to be coddled and are often offended because of too scant attention, who spend far more upon the movies than upon the propaganda of the faith. Who are we that we should seek exemption from the sacrifices of the Kingdom? That a noble answer given by a missionary board in western Asia to a group of Turkish students who intimated that they were thinking seriously of becoming Christians but wanted to know if the board could secure for them immunity from persecution. "No," was the reply. "We are followers of a crucified Savior." When we look up to "that strange man upon the cross" and see that pale face striped with dark blood, the thought often comes to us: Am I really a Christian, after all? If this is the high cost of the Christian life we have a feeling that we have kept back a large part of the price. Let us all come down from our pedestal of privilege and comfort and take fresh hold of the work of the Lord till it costs. The communist and fascist are willing to suffer for a cause. Why not the Christian?

III

Yet another part of the high cost of Christian living is expressed in the words "follow me"—*self-surrender* to the Lordship of Christ. And now abideth self-denial, self-sacrifice, and self-surrender, but the greatest of these is self-surrender because it catches up the other two, transfigures them and integrates them with itself. Self-denial for its own sake might become, as it has often become, a St. Simeon Stylites affair, too subjective, too careless of mankind, as Tennyson has shown us in his magnificent poem of that name. But when we practice self-denial in the followership and fellowship of Jesus we are saved from all morbid asceticisms. Even self-sacrifice for its own sake runs the risk of self-righteousness or weariness, but when we practice self-sacrifice in the followership and fellowship of Jesus we shall do good and not be weary and the grace of humility shall make our goodness lovely.

Yes, self-surrender to Jesus Christ, the perfect man and perfect servant of the Lord, takes in all. There is nothing outside of that for the Christian to do or be as a man of God. "Follow me," the Master said. Everybody knows what it means for a team-member to follow his captain, for a student to follow his teacher, for a soldier to follow his general and the candidate for Christianity to follow the Christ. It is to think his thoughts, feel his feelings, carry out his purposes, to take him not only as our moral example but for our example of faith and hope and love in the service of God. He has been not only the chief conscience of the last nineteen hundred years but also that greatest believer and the "Mr. Hopeful" of the ages. He is our Savior. To follow him in a life of self-denial and self-sacrifice and self-surrender is real Christianity. To follow him without these qualities is to behave like children who wet their feet in the great sea and then hurry to dry ground again. What our Lord expects is the headlong plunge of the diver. If any man will come after me let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me whole-heartedly.

There should be little need to add that this is the type of Christianity we sorely need today. Democracy is said to be in danger not so much from communism and fascism *without* as from something rotten *within*, the corruption arising from the lack of self-discipline. There be those who would enforce such discipline by regimentation on the part of an all-absorbing state; but that would mean the loss of liberty. Better to do voluntarily what dictators would impose by force. "'Tis liberty alone that gives the flower of fleeting life its luster and perfume and we are weeds without it." But let us have good order too through the self-discipline of the nation, beginning with the individual.

This type of Christianity we need to fit us for that inheritance of light, an inheritance of responsibility and service. Heaven will not be a place of everlasting ease where folk sit down forever amid the soft surge of erotic hymnody. We shall be like him for we shall see him as he is, the King in his beauty going before his followers on some high emprise. And now unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

The Minister's Consecration

By James W. Clarke

I render thanks to Jesus Christ, who has made me able for this; He considered me trustworthy, and appointed me to the ministry. I Timothy 1:12. (Moffatt)

THERE is a resounding and grateful ring in this sentence of Paul's letter to the young preacher, Timothy. Formerly "blasphemer, persecutor and injurious"—now, O! the amazing wonder of it—"appointed to the ministry." But Paul is only articulating the amazement in every honest preacher's heart. When Dr. Fosdick cries, "If I had a thousand lives to live, I should use them in the ministry," he but reflects the sentiment of our highest hours. For let him deny it who will, the preacher is God's speaking man and the real master of society. Not elected by society to be its ruler, but elected by God to form its ideals, to arouse its conscience, to enlarge its mind, and thus to direct its life.

Whose position can even begin to compare with ours? The teacher deals with youth, usually of one gender; the doctor with the sick and failing; the lawyer with the troubled and those in fear of death; but we deal with all ages and types of people. The shoemaker deals with leather, the mechanic with iron, the salesman with merchandise, the sculptor with stone; but our raw material is human life in its staggering complexity and boundless possibilities.

Some of Paul's wonder about the ministry is caught by tough old Thomas Carlyle when he exclaims: "That a man stand there and speak of spiritual things to men, it is beautiful even in its greatest obscuration and decadence. It is among the beautifullest, most touching objects one sees on earth. This Speaking Man has indeed in these times wandered terribly far from the point; has, alas, as it were, totally lost sight of the point, Yet, at bottom, whom have we to compare with him? Of all public functionaries boarded and lodged on the industry of modern Europe, is there one worthier of the board he has?"

What an encouraging and yet devastating utterance! "Greatest of all public functionaries" . . . "wandered terribly far from the point." Can we deny our wandering? And can we deny that our wandering lies chiefly in the areas of moral daring and personal character? "My pride," "My willfulness," "My impurity," "My rebellion," "My cowardice," "My indiscipline"—these ought to be, and occasionally are, the self-reproaching sigh of our spirits. Blood brothers are we to Peter in the cry, "Depart from me, O God, for I am a sinful man!" Shrunken sinews that make us limp have we all!

It is the simple truth that so far as our ministry is concerned, we are not all there. We rejoice in it, but do not give it the last full measure of devotion. It does not receive all we have. The cry, "Let the people repent," is valid. More valid is, "Let the pulpit repent." The passionate need of the church is not more money, machinery or methods, but a ministry rededicated, intelligently and completely.

I

It must be a rededication, first, to God.

Quaint William Blake illustrates one of his poems with a small man standing at the foot of a ladder which disappears into the fleecy clouds. His arms are stretched upwards, and from his flung-back face comes the cry, "I want! I want! I want!" What a parable of man in this hour! Many qualities are lacking at this time in our congregations. Real generosity, knowledge, sacrifice or social sense are rare, but we can look for and easily find wistfulness. They may not be able either to articulate or interpret this, but the underlying reason why people come to church is to find God. This is not all the truth but it is the center of it. The heart and the flesh of man still cry out for the living God. "When I go to church," said Milton, "I want to hear about God." "Oh sir, give us God," cried the gypsies as they spurned the money George Borrow flung to them.

How can we give our people that which we do not possess? Primarily they do not come to get our views on this or that, but to be brought into touch with spiritual reality. The mystical note is sadly lacking in the pulpit. When we preach, how many hear a voice from behind the hills, and see the angels of God ascending and descending? Is there anything in our words that whispers, and sings, and prays, and chants? Anything that sweeps our needy people up into the heavenly places in Christ Jesus? All week they are one-dimensional; the housewife is concerned with her home, the schoolteacher with her lessons, the business man with his mundane problems. Their walk is so pedestrian. Their lives are so prosaic. Ever their eyes are on the ground. Then on Sunday they come to church. As we stand before them, is there about us such friendship, compassion, pure love and spiritual quality that they are solemnized and exalted, and brought to a realization that they are two-dimensional people; that, in a deep sense, heaven is their home; and they are creatures of eternity now living in time?

Alas, merely to ask the question is to answer it. As ministers, our first great need is a new, vivid, continuous and growing experience of God. He must become

James W. Clarke

as real to us as our wives, our children, our friends. We must love his presence and seek it. As we spend delightful evenings with boon companions, so must we spend similar periods in communion with and in fiery brooding upon God. To preach God we must know God. To reveal God, he must be revealed in us. Our people will never find God until they find him in character—our character.

We can take it as axiomatic that our preaching will have neither sweep nor compass, height nor depth, majesty nor grandeur; will convey no sense of direction, will produce no sense of stability; until we are filled with the fullness of God.

For me, Jesus is the Way to God. There is only one explanation of him—God. He was full of God. His harmony and dedication were so melodious and complete that no lesser reason is sufficient. For how is individual personality produced? Thusly: from father and mother conjointly with the addition of a spark of divinity. The vitality of the spark differs with individuals, else brothers and sisters would have the same

personality. In the case of Jesus, the spark of God's life was so vital that all fleshly inheritance was swept aside and that spark monopolized the whole. He is the only being in history who, without reserve, said "Yes" to God. "I and my Father are one." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." He is God's highest creative revelation, and whoever lives in fellowship with him is in fellowship with the Father. Our dedication to God is through Christ. It is significant that at the first recorded ordination to the Christian ministry one question, and one question only, was asked; and it was asked thrice: "Lovest thou me?"

II

The ministry must be rededicated, second, to people.

Out of the first dedication inevitably emerges the second. On our Lord's last night before the cross, speaking his farewell to the disciples who were already cowering under the threat of the priesthood and the terror of the Roman power, he suddenly broke into prayer on their behalf—surely the tenderest prayer in religious history: "Father, the hour is come. I pray, not for the world, but for them whom Thou hast given me. For their sakes I sanctify myself." As Luccock says, "Jesus never saw crowds, he only saw faces." He was the great and good Shepherd, and looking upon the multitudes, "he was moved with compassion."

Have we sought the shepherd heart? Have we sanctified ourselves for their sakes? Is this a dedication so severe and demanding that we shrink from it? Did ever a generation stand in need of shepherding as this generation—deeply wounded by secularism, haunted by care, hag-ridden by successive waves of fear? "In things we trust," cried the people in the lush and lustful "twenties." Happiness, to them, was bound up with money, securities, jobs, motors, houses, physical pleasures. Deprived of these, lo, happiness disappeared as a star at break of day. How pathetic the disillusionment! Not only disillusionment has been our people's portion, but betrayal. The few altars of trust they had built lie broken and scattered. The betrayal started when the ideals for which so many of them had fought were flung to the dogs in the Carthaginian peace rammed down the throats of the Central Powers with a gun butt at Versailles. Succeeding years have but completed the melancholy story.

Wherein lies the remedy? What must the people be given? Shepherding. The shepherding of the New Testament. "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Dare we ministers take a long look at the question, "What are our people costing us?" Do we know them—care for them—carry them in the arms of intercession to God? Do we love them—aye, love them so much that we shall tell them the truth of God as it is given to us, whether they bear or forbear? For it is only the truth that can set them free. Their cry is for an easy, "simple" gospel. As if the gospel of which no original manuscript is in our hands, that was delivered to an Eastern and rural people two thousand years ago in the idiom and thought forms of that time, can possibly be "simple." It may be stated simply, but "simple"—never.

And easy? When at the center and on its skyline, stands a naked, rugged, blood-stained cross! Here is a costly and exhausting dedication. The echo of Knox's iron words to the haughty Mary should ever be in our ears—"I am one who has no option but to speak the things God has given me to speak, and to fear no flesh on the face of the earth." We stand at no altar of expediency, but are ministers of the Most High God, fired upon the world with a velocity that is not our own.

We are shepherds who covet the imaginative sympathy of the Great Shepherd who felt the uncleanness of the leper, the darkness of the blind, the loneliness of the poor, and the fierce misery of the rich. We are suffering servants of humanity, who must sit where our people sit. Searching are the words of H. S. Pritchard: "He [the minister] must have so deep a fund of vicarious sympathy that no woman in childbirth, no boy in his first drunken frenzy, no subtle maladjustment of matrimony, no strange obsession and no hidden fear can catch him unawares." We dare not avoid the question "Lovest thou me?" thrice repeated at the first ordination. Dare we disobey the first command at that ordination, also thrice repeated, "Feed my sheep"?

III

There must be a rededication of the ministry, third, to the gospel.

As I review my own ministry I confess my dedication has been woefully incomplete. My gospel has been at times a caricature of Christ's gospel. Do we know what that gospel is? Or is the allegation true that for the past hundred years we have been engaged in the solemn business of forgetting it? We have not repudiated it, but we have been ignorant of it, allowed it to be adulterated with the wisdom of the world, and have misplaced the emphasis. Particularly the latter.

A brother minister dogmatically says, "The gospel of Jesus is a social gospel." With equal positiveness another says, "The gospel of Jesus is the gospel of the individual." It is neither, because it is a synthesis. It is both, because the greater includes the lesser. The "individualist" preacher must drop the glib cliché that to remake civilization you must make good men. That is only half the truth. Man is a societal being and lives in an environment. He cannot avoid its influence and is always under its bombardment. No matter how determinedly he thrusts life away, he cannot live in vacuo. Also, the social order is not composed merely of the individuals now living in the world—it is made up of inherited attitudes which have persisted through the generations and are now embodied in customs, institutions and laws; and it has existed in a definite measure independently of persons. Change those individual souls and you do not of necessity change the social order, unless you organize the changed individuals into collective action on a wide scale frontal attack on these corporate evils. Dr. Luccock, in his book *Christianity and the Individual,* puts this truth beyond dispute: "Salvation must include social attitudes and actions. Otherwise it is fragmentary, subnormal. To be saved is to be set free for the good purposes of God in Jesus

Christ. No salvation which does not include repentance for sharing in actions and social positions which defeat the purpose of God for men, leads to the 'changed life' in a Christian sense. Arthur Stringer expresses this need:

"'When I house me close in a twilight inn, where I brood by a dying fire,
When I kennel and cringe with fat content where a pillow and loaf are sure;
Oh, on the anvil of Thy wrath, remake me, God, that day. . . .'"

We do need a goodness that is personal, but it must be a type of personal goodness that will passionately seek the mind of Christ in economics, politics, social and international relations. The reverse side of the truth must equally be remembered. The "social gospel" preacher is an equal sinner with the "individualist." He must realize that as bricks cannot be made without straw nor silken purses from sows' ears, no society can be better than the individuals who comprise it. Christ will reign in the kingdom without frontiers only when he is Lord at the center of individual men. When the individual and the society are mated, then will we have the land of our dreams, and not till then. We must preach all the fullness of Christ—nothing less is his gospel. What a gospel it is! How full and adequate for every need of man's mind and heart! Like a beautifully cut diamond, its bright facets are many in number.

It is the Gospel of God—God as existent, approachable, available, righteous, loving.

It is the gospel of the Kingdom—the ideal state in the individual soul; the ideal state in the social order; the beatific state beyond.

It is the Gospel of Life—that happiness is not through sensory but spiritual values; that life must be spiritually interpreted; that a man may be "full of bread" and yet an hungered.

It is the Gospel of Man—that personality cannot fully achieve itself apart from religion and that man is a spiritual being whom irreligion destroys because it denies that which lies at the heart of his nature.

It is the Gospel of the Cross—which in essence is the deliberate identification of the Christian with the moral tragedy of life.

How complete and ardent should be our service to this mighty gospel! It is the good news. It is the hope of man. It is the solvent for human woe and sin. As the proclaimers of that glorious gospel, are we worthy?

Nothing less than this triple dedication will do; a dedication which embraces God, man, and Christ's Gospel. The measure of that dedication will be, to a degree, the measure of the world's regeneration.

Let us solemnly remind ourselves that some day we shall stand at the judgment seat of God, who will look upon us with a level eye and say: "I gave you a life, what did you do with it?"

A Pastoral Prayer

By A. Lloyd Smith

O GOD our Father, before Thy throne high and lifted up we bow in humility. The vision of Thy purity and holiness fills our hearts with shame and penitence, but we lift our eyes in hopeful trust to One in the midst of the Throne, a Lamb that was slain. In his name we pray to be forgiven for our unnumbered transgressions. Help us to believe that Thou dost cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Creatures of Thy hand, shepherded by Thine unfaltering providence, we crave Thy quickening touch upon our eyes, that we may see afresh and vividly how excellent is Thy lovingkindness toward us this very day, and every day. Rid our hearts of the fog of self-pity and discontent and fill them with the joyous sunshine of the faith that Thou, God of our lives, doest all things well.

Lord of the whole earth, we beseech Thee to lift us out of our petty selfishness and bring us to feel something of Thine unwavering, universal concern. We would share Thy longing to feed the hungry and to provide every man with a worthy share in the world's work. We would feel something of Thy grief and abhorrence at the cruelty, and injustice of those who make war, or stir up enmity. Rid our hearts of prejudice that we may see our complicity in social iniquities and international evils. Stir up our sluggish spirits that with valor and perseverance we may contend against everything which debases or devalues our fellow men.

To these supreme ends consecrate, we pray Thee, Thy church, leading us out into the thick of the world's worst need and enabling us with unfaltering confidence to proclaim that Good News which is Thy saving power to everyone who believes. Particularly do we pray for Thy servants, our brethren, on all mission fields that by life and word they may build upon the sure foundation.

Here in the household of faith we commend to Thine especial care our brethren and sisters in any affliction. Healer of the body, Good Physician of the soul, lay Thy recovering and sustaining hand upon each of them.

For ourselves we ask minds and wills increasingly sensitive to Thy suggestion and direction. Thy will be done by us in every opportunity with which Thou dost honor us. Increase our faith, our hope, our love and in spite of our many failures bring us at length to join those who with their Leader have conquered in the fight.

These our petitions we humbly present, seeking always to pray in the spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Preaching Missions to Modern Congregations

By Ernest Marshall Howse

A WHITE-HAIRED Superintendent of Missions in the United Church of Canada tells with impressiveness his memories of his first missionary meeting. It was held more than half a century ago in a village church in Ontario. The people of the village (on a week-day evening) filled the church to the doors. They gathered to greet a missionary returned from China, and to gain at least some vicarious contact with the so-called "heathen" world.

During the course of his address the missionary, making use of a then impressive illustration, hushed his audience until it was dominated by the slow ticking of a noisy clock on the rear wall. Then, as he waved his hand in time with the pendulum, he reminded his hearers that with every tick another Chinese had fallen into hell. Drum-beating immortal souls into a hopeless eternity, the missionary laid awful obligation upon those listening Christians. They sat in their seats like spectators who might have made some rescue, seeing too late the victims falling back into a burning building; seeing also that more in peril might yet be saved. The meeting became tense with a feeling of terrible urgency. One boy was never to forget it. Still below his teens, he decided that he must grow up quickly to save some of the Chinese.

• *Waning Enthusiasm For Missions*

The great majority of people who fill our churches today look back to such a meeting as to an event in a world that is no more. For them the habitation of theological thought in which that missionary lived is as completely gone as the little village church in which he spoke.

But the vivid memory of the boy who is now a Missionary Superintendent brings back something to give pause to every modern minister. The people of that congregation were governed by ideas which their successors believe to have been false and narrow, and to be now profitably outgrown. But the false and narrow ideas generated an intensity of concern, and resulted in an outpouring of practical devotion such as the newer and better ideas seem entirely unable to sustain.

A modern minister would not willingly seek a rekindling of missionary zeal through a return to the old framework of ideas. But he may sometimes wonder what can now be said to a congregation, village or otherwise, that will kindle to equal incandescence the zealous interest of modern Christians.

Many a minister of this later day has discovered that in his efforts to promote the missionary enterprises of the church, he is puffing the embers of a dying fire. In many churches today a disproportionate number of the real supporters of the Christian missionary enterprises are older people. Even the measure of service still maintained is maintained by the momentum of a past enthusiasm.

It is not so significant that the missionary movement is a minority movement. It has always been that. Even at its very zenith, when its witnesses

Ernest Marshall Howse

numbered more than thirty thousand Protestant missionaries throughout the non-Christian world, it was a minority movement. The missionary enterprise has never been an enthusiasm of the whole church. It has been the enthusiasm of an *ecclesia* within the church. It has been conspicuously an enthusiasm of the young. And the world knows no brighter hope than that it holds for a minority movement of the young; but it promises nothing save an epitaph for a minority movement of the dying.

The practical issue before many a minister today is how to set aflame an enthusiasm for world-wide evangelism among adolescents, youth and young married folk. Unless new interest is to burn in such lives, the present decline in missionary enterprise is no more than the senile decay before slow coming death. How can the needed enthusiasm be awakened and harnessed?

• *Old Sanctions—And New*

Some time ago at the close of a service in which I had made appeal for more practical supplement of Christian profession, an unkempt individual passed me a piece of folded paper on which was written, "Get your congregation converted, and you will get all the rest." Someone may be tempted to set in similar terms the present problem. But so to set it is simply to evade it. The people of the congregation are converted—so far. But conversion does not automatically make Peter and Paul agree on going to the Gentiles. The very problem is how to get the congregation converted to the idea that there is no being Christian anywhere without earnest trying to make Christians everywhere.

Present-day Christians are not so convinced, and give ample witness in their relative expenditures for missions and for cigarettes and silk stockings. In this lack of conviction they are not so different from Christians of most other periods of Christian history. There have been but three real outbursts of missionary enthusiasm since Pentecost; and previous to the beginning of the last and greatest, the whole conception of missionary obligation seems to have passed from the mind of the church. At the beginning of the eighteenth century there was not a Protestant missionary in all the world.

Present-day Christians are not less Christian than Christians of previous days. In many ways they are more Christian. Often they are failing to give support to missionary enterprises because there are a number of issues alive and near at hand—the banishment of war, the reconstruction of our economic and social systems—which they feel more immediately relevant. For these issues they do feel imperatives; but for the far-off missionary tasks they have lost the old sanctions, and have not yet discovered any vital new ones.

• *Saving Souls, Then And Now*

The old sanctions, it is as well to recognize, were precisely those which so impressed the boy at the missionary meeting in Ontario. It is beyond question that the missionaries went out into all the world to "save souls." And to save souls had a definite theological meaning, bearing little relation to life in this world. It meant not at all to place a more "integrated personality" in more favorable social cir-

cumstance. It meant to bring home a lost sinner to "spend eternity" (strange paradox) in heaven, instead of "spending" it in hell. This was not the only motive, but it was the primary motive. And with Chinese falling into hell every second, and with Christians possessing the only specific of salvation, nothing more was needed to impress the devout believer that the King's business required right-of-way and haste.

How different the congregation to which the Superintendent of Missions now speaks, from that in which so long ago he listened! His hearers now lack precisely the urgency that caught hold of the old Ontario congregation, and that indeed caught hold of the whole Christian world. Is it possible that with conceptions so radically different, present-day Christians may discover in the new outlook a relevance more practical and an urgency more imperative than their fathers found in the old? The modern minister believes that they can.

• *A Changed Setting For Missions*

The whole problem now is in a different setting. The urgency has taken on new character. Formerly Christians were exercised whether the Christian religion would save heathen from hell in the hereafter; now their equal pertinent concern is also whether the Christian religion may save themselves and the heathen from hell here and now.

A new and startling factor has arisen to confront contemporary Christians. When missionaries, a lifetime ago, spread over the earth, their voice was the only voice calling to all the world for one common and supreme allegiance. It could then be said, as it now cannot, that Christianity had many critics but no rivals. In the sense in which that phrase was coined it is indeed still true. The missionary, more notably than any other man, has kept it true. Beyond question, in terms of unselfish ministry to human needs, mankind has at no time seen any other service to compare with that of Christian missionaries.

In a second sense this phrase is still true. There are many religions. There is only one that has ever claimed to be universal. As the Bishop of Durham has declared, it is unthinkable that mankind in all its rich varieties of types and cultures should be Buddhist or Mohommedan; but it is not only thinkable, but even probable, that if religion survives at all among mankind, it will finally be Christian. Christianity has sectional rivals, but in the field of religion it still has no world rival. For the first time in history there is struggling to be born a single world culture; and in that hour the Christian minister is the minister of the only world religion.

But in a third sense the phrase is no longer true. A new issue has arisen which puts the whole problem of Christian missions in a new setting—a setting which ought to bring a new note of realism and relevance precisely to those earnest, intelligent moderns who hitherto believed that, as they might express it, the devotion of Christians ought to be given to something more immediate and urgent than carrying another theology to the Orient.

• *The New Rivals of Christianity*

The new issue is simply this: Christianity for the first time has world rivals; rivals arising not from other religions, but from a substitute for all religions. The authoritarian state, communist or fascist, is the expression of an emerging world culture, which still nourishes antagonisms in external pattern but which has unmistakable unity in its utter incompatibility with the Christian view of human life. Competing for supremacy in the first world culture, the ideologies which have found expression in two forms of government are far more than forms of government. They have not only in the most astonishing ways taken the guise and regalia of religion; they aspire to take the place of religion. They give to their devotees a feeling that they are building a new world in which old values will be abolished and new values will be maintained. They assert themselves to be the objects of ultimate devotion to which all other devotions must be minor and subordinate. And they have the most passionate missionary enthusiasm to stamp the world culture of the future with their likeness.

This new issue brings new consequences. No longer can concern with Christianity be kept sectional. In the old days the battle to make a nation Christian might reasonably be said to be a battle within the nation. Far different is it now. Today the world is but fancifully divided between heathen and Christian. Now in a profound sense there is not East or West, North or South. Now there is no white, nor yellow, nor brown. There is only human life, becoming ennobled or debased as it seeks to maintain itself in God's little garden among the stars.

• *Missions on a World Front*

Today, then, if we are interested in the survival of Christianity anywhere, we must be interested in it everywhere. A farmer might as well endeavor to sustain his falling market by saying that he was interested only in his own county, as Christians endeavor to preserve a Christian culture by concern only with their own home. Not only is it certain that wherever these new militant rivals of Christianity become supreme, Christianity will be obliterated; but its obliteration in one area will always be a step toward its obliteration in some other area. The pattern of what is accomplished in one country today is the pattern of what will be attempted in another country tomorrow. In short, the world is one. World culture is being shaped on a world front. And if Christians desire that culture to have Christianity at its heart, they must fight on a world front.

They must not only be men of the world mind, they must be men of the passionate heart. *There may be immemorial consequence in the tragic coincidence that Christianity lost the glow at precisely that moment in history when the negation of Christianity became incandescent with missionary enthusiasm.*

If Christians believe that the Good News from God through Jesus Christ is the sole permanent foundation for a worthy civilization, then to publish that news is incomparably the most important work in the present world; for out of it are the issues of life.

• *'Five Minutes to Twelve' For Humanity*

Here, then, for the modern minister are all the makings of a great "cause." The old missionary enterprise was a cause, for a time the most momentous and most thrilling on earth. The new ideologies now staring Christianity out of countenance have gained their hold upon the present generation because they have always come as a cause—giving men and women what they wanted, "something to live for, something to die for." Christianity has been failing, it has been wisely said, not because its challenge has been too high for human devotion, but because it has been too low for human inspiration. But the Christian missionary enterprise, properly appraised, is a cause, the head and front of every high battle on earth today.

The people of the modern congregation provide an unsurpassed recruiting ground for such a cause. Well informed as they are concerning the great issues which are working weal or woe for all mankind, they can be made to see that dismissing the missionary enterprise as irrelevant to our fateful times has been a curious and collossal error; that in this hour when the set of generations and of centuries may be determined, when such rival voices are calling for supreme allegiance, when it is "Five Minutes to Twelve" in the hour of human destiny, it is of imperative need that the word of the Christian gospel be heard wherever there are ears to hear; that in all the world there is no single class of men more critically important than Christian missionaries; that with the missionary, Christians may yet make the Christian church the greatest internationale on earth, and bring mankind to see the salvation of our God.

Who's Who in This Issue

A native of Scotland, Rev. G. Stanley Russell received his education at Aberdeen University. In 1924 he was elected chairman of the Central Missions Committee of the London Congregational Union, and four years later was named chairman of the Union. In 1929 he accepted the pastorate of the Deer Park Church in Toronto, coming from Grafton Square, Clapham, London. Mr. Russell holds D.D. degrees from Victoria University, Toronto, and Aberdeen University, Scotland. Among his books are *The Church in the Modern World, The Face of God* and *The Road Behind Me,* the last named book being his autobiography.

Rev. T. W. Jones *has spent all the* years of his pastorate with one congregation, Calvary United Church, Westmount, Quebec, of which church he became a member while a student, in 1912. Born in England, he was sent to Canada by the Congregational Colonial Missionary Society in 1910. He was graduated in Arts from McGill University in 1916 and the same year was in war service overseas with the Y.M.C.A. Mr. Jones holds M.A. and B.D. degrees.

Born in Scotland, Rev. James S. Thomson received his education at the University of Glasgow and Trinity College, Glasgow. He was a fellow in philosophy at the University of Glasgow for six years, in theology for one year. He served in the World War, with the Cameron Highlanders. Dr. Thomson was ordained in the ministry of the Church of Scotland in 1920, and held a pastorate for four years. From 1924 to 1930 he was secretary of education for the Church of Scotland. During the next seven years he was professor of systematic theology and philosophy of religion at Pine Hill Divinity Hall, Halifax, Nova Scotia. Since 1937 he has been president of the University of Saskatchewan. Dr. Thomson has published two books, *Studies in the Life of Jesus* and *The Way of Revelation.*

Rev. E. Crossley Hunter *is a graduate* of Toronto University and received a D.D. degree from Emmanuel College, Toronto. He is minister of First United Church, Hamilton, Ontario. Previous to church union in Canada he was a minister in the Canadian Methodist Church. Mr. Hunter is a son of the late Rev. John E. Hunter, widely known in Canada as an evangelist.

Rev. F. H. McIntosh *is minister of* First United Church, Campbellton, New Brunswick. Born in Nova Scotia, he was educated at Dalhousie University and Pine Hill Divinity Hall (which honored him with a D.D. degree) and at Trinity College, Glasgow.

Since 1932 Rev. James W. Clarke *has* ministered to Knox United Church in Winnipeg. Born in Glasgow, he received his education there and at McGill University in Montreal. He served four years in the World War and was awarded an M.C. at Amiens in 1918. Graduating from the Presbyterian College, Montreal, four years later, he was minister of Westmount Park Melville United Church for five years. Mr. Clarke is a student of housing and unemployment and his work in these fields has been recognized by his appointment to the Provincial Government Single Men's Unemployment and Youth Training Commission.

Rev. A. Lloyd Smith *has for the past* eight years ministered at the Dominion-Douglas United Church, Westmount, Quebec.

Rev. Ernest Marshall Howse *is minister* of Westminster Church, Winnipeg. Born in Newfoundland, he was educated at Dalhousie University and Pine Hill Seminary, in Nova Scotia. He received an S.T.M. degree at Union Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. at Edinburgh. His first pastorate was at Beverly Hills, Cal.

Titles and Texts

What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About

Richard N. Owen, First Baptist, Clarksville, Tenn. "A Prayer-Conditioned Church." Acts 1:14, 2:2—"These all with one accord continued steadfast in prayer. . . . And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind and it filled all the house."

Sarah A. Dixon, United Congregational, Little Compton, R. I. "How Far Are We from God?" Luke 15:13—"And took his journey into a far country."

FOR YOUR SERMON AND TEXT

. . . . . .
Title of Sermon

. . . . . .
Text used (write out the text)

. . . . . .
Name of minister

. . . . . .
Name of church

. . . . . .
Address

Frederick H. Dawson, Presbyterian, Belleville, Kansas. "The Perspective of the Sanctuary." Psalm 73:17—"Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end."

James C. Perkins, Meth. & Cong. Federated, Schroon Lake, N. Y. "Prophetic Empathy." Ezek. 3:15—"I came to them of the captivity . . . and I sat where they sat."

John W. Hutchinson, Presbyterian, Bridgeton, N. J. "Keeping Life's Growing Edge." Romans 12:2—"Be not conformed . . . but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."

Lloyd S. Hindman, Manokin Presbyterian, Princess Anne, Maryland. "Religious Gymnastics." James 1:22—"But be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

G. R. Gross, First Baptist, Britton, Oklahoma. "Magnetic Christianity." Acts 6:10—"They were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke."

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE repeal of the embargo on arms and war materials, asked for by the President, involves an official commitment of the United States to the Allied side of the European conflict. The fault which Mr. Roosevelt found with the present law is that it operates negatively in favor of Germany, by closing down the American source of supplies for the allies who alone have the ships to come and get them. There can be no doubt that the sympathies of the American people are overwhelmingly with Great Britain and France. But it does not follow that we should take part in the struggle. Unless we wish positively to participate in the war, the action of changing our law in a manner that officially expresses our sympathy with one side or against the other is not only an unneutral act but a prejudicial one for our own future freedom of action. American sympathies are one thing; official action by the government is another. This is not our war. America is at peace with all the world. When we affirm, as the whole country does, including the President himself, that it is not our war, we must mean, not merely that we had no part in starting it, but that we have no substantial *national* stake in its outcome—that is to say, no stake that would justify our taking a military part in it. To change the terms of our neutrality in the interest of one side, is essentially an unneutral act. Having given this hostage to one side there will be a steadily increasing pull from that side and a steadily increasing pressure from both our sympathies and our economic interests to give more. The repeal of the embargo is the first step toward America's involvement in the war.

America's Neutrality

The Book of the Month

THE EVANGEL OF A NEW WORLD, *by Albert Edward Day. Cokesbury Press, $1.50.*

LET me say in a word why I recommend this book: it is one of the best illustrations of the actual preaching of the social gospel and the personal gospel integrated into a single gospel which I have read in many a day. Dr. Day is primarily a preacher. He has lived, however, with the great ideas that are transforming the thought patterns of our time. He is disillusioned with respect to many of the controlling dogmas that dominated liberalism up to a few years ago, yet he has kept the open mind of liberalism. This is not so important, however, as the fact that Dr. Day has done his own thinking. You feel in his pages that the currents of the new liberalism (which includes so much of the older orthodoxy) have not only flowed through his mind but have been arrested there long enough for him to blend them into a new stream of conviction which he pours forth with vital eloquence. His discussion of the Kingdom of God was particularly interesting to me. It exhibits a more than casual acquaintance with the results of the newer criticism of the New Testament. If this busy preacher, facing the enormous responsibilities of his First Methodist parish in Pasadena, can find time to keep up with the developments in New Testament study, there is not a single preacher who reads this review who cannot do the same. My profound sense of the importance of the New Testament is almost on the point of issuing in a slogan, and I have an aversion to slogans of all kinds. Nevertheless, "Back to the New Testament!" I would write on the banner of every Christian minister. Scholarship is showing this book to us in a new light. It is a greater book than either Fundamentalist or Modernist ever imagined. Plainly, Dr. Day, like so many others of us, has rediscovered it and his preaching is clothed with prophetic power.

A Thought for the Month

THERE are two kinds of prayer. Let us call one instinctive and the other responsible prayer. With war spreading from country to country, the whole world presents the aspect of a single congregation storming the throne of grace for help, for protection, for victory, for bread, for peace, for life itself. This instinctive prayer may be unuttered or expressed, but it is prayer. The Christian church too lifts up its hands in prayer. What should be the burden of its utterance? It would be as fatuous as it would be heartless for the church to deny in its worship the free expression of these instinctive yearnings. But the church has a more important function, namely, to encourage and to exemplify responsible prayer. "We know not how to pray as we ought," said the apostle. There is, then, something more to prayer than the instinctive expression of our natural wants. In Christian prayer, God's answer returns upon man to search out his human responsibility for the evil which he prays to have averted. War is God's terrible Word to man, telling him wherein the thing which man calls civilization is shot through with evil. Responsible prayer is answered by the illumination of this evil. Our prayer, then, must involve not merely the yearning for protection and victory, or even for peace, but the confession of our guilt, and an honest determination that when peace comes again it shall be a just peace upon which a warless world may be built. There is one prayer that must precede all truly Christian prayer. It was voiced by the disciples of Jesus when they came to him saying, Lord, teach us to pray!

Prayer in War Time

Charles Clayton Morrison

'A Homiletical Library of the Richest Value'

LEWIS H. CHRISMAN is Professor of English Literature at the West Virginia Wesleyan College, as well as a teacher of preachers and maker of sermons. He has been a special lecturer at Drew Theological Seminary, Garrett Biblical Institute, West Virginia University and other schools. Among his published books are *The Message of the American Pulpit, The English of the Pulpit* and *Ten-Minute Sermons.*

Professor Chrisman has for years been a reader of The Christian Century Pulpit. He writes:

> "I have just been going through the volumes of The Christian Century Pulpit, and I cannot let pass this opportunity of telling you how much I value it. There is no publication which comes to my desk which I open with more of a thrill of anticipation. It has never been better than it has been during the past six months. I have all of the numbers from the beginning and there is nothing I enjoy more than spending an evening with the back numbers. The files constitute a homiletical library of the richest value."

Other Appreciations of The Christian Century Pulpit

I have been an enthusiastic reader of the Pulpit from the first issue and find it extremely stimulating. I usually begin to read it in Chinese fashion—first, "A Thought for the Month," then "Titles and Texts," and then the sermons.

W. Nelson Winter,
Calvary Evangelical Church,
Baltimore, Md.

The Pulpit is a real inspiration to me. I have been helped greatly in my own preaching by fellowshiping with those who preach through its pages.

Roland C. Marriott,
First Congregational Church,
Ashfield, Mass.

I continually find much of profit in the pages of the Pulpit.

William H. Boddy,
Westminster Presbyterian Church,
Minneapolis, Minn.

I welcome the Pulpit to my desk and want to thank you for the contribution you are making to busy pastors.

A. D. Stauffacher,
Claremont Church,
Claremont, Cal.

Permit me to express my sincere gratitude for the Pulpit. It has proved a source of inspiration, challenge and stimulation in my ministry.

Vaclav Kejr,
Bohemian Evangelical Church,
Dankovice, Czechoslovakia.

I have been greatly interested in your section, "Titles and Texts." The subjects and texts presented are thought-provoking.

W. Oliver Harrison,
First Christian Church,
Pecos, Tex.

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